

M STREET NE NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING NOTES - FEBRUARY 26, 2009



On February 26, 2009 the City of Auburn Mayor and City staff met with neighbors of M Street NE neighborhood at the Auburn School District Administration Building, 915 4th Street NE, to discuss neighborhood concerns and gather input on the 8th and Harvey Utility and Street Improvement Project.

Staff in Attendance: MAYOR PETE LEWIS, COMMUNITY SERVICES MANAGER DUANNA RICHARDS, COMMUNITY SERVICES PROJECT ASSISTANT KIRSTEN REYNOLDS, PRINCIPAL PLANNER ELIZABETH CHAMBERLAIN, SENIOR PLANNER STACEY BORLAND, PLANNER STUART WAGNER, ASST. POLICE CHIEF LARRY MILLER, EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS MANAGER SARAH MILLER, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR DENNIS DOWDY, TRANSPORTATION PLANNER CHRIS HANKINS, PROJECT ENGINEER JACOB SWEETING, , PARKS PLANNING & DEV. MGR. BOB WUOTILA, SOLID WASTE CUSTOMER CARE KATHLEEN EDMAN AND CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER MIKE DUNBAR

Community Members in Attendance: ANN WAYBRIGHT, BD HOHNSTEIN, BRUCE MEIER, CHRISTINE LUDWIGSON, ELAINE POWELL, FRANK BRAY, GLEN WARRICK, JOHN BITTINGER, KYLE MEIER, KEN LONN, LOIS WALKER, RODGER AND SHARON BIRGEN, STAN & LANI BENEVEDS, JIM MONDT, NANCY COLSON, VAL ERICKSON AND ANITA YUROVCHAK (PUGET SOUND ENERGY REPRESENTATIVE)

Welcome and Introductions

Mayor Pete Lewis welcomed everyone, thanked them for attending and asked City staff to introduce themselves. Mayor Lewis then indicated the primary purpose of the meeting was for the City to listen to the residents' concerns, consider solutions, respond to questions they could answer immediately and identify items for follow up. The City takes notes of the meeting, which are then sent out to the attendees. Mayor Lewis asked for questions from the audience that did not pertain to the road improvement project; project questions were going to be answered during staff's presentation.

Mayor Lewis facilitated the meeting and discussed the following topics:

- **Mayor's Update** -- residents were encouraged to sign up for the Mayor's Update, an e-newsletter Mayor Lewis sends out every Friday about what's taken place in the City during the week, upcoming events, etc. He also uses the listserv to send out alerts about road closures, emergencies, etc. as a way to keep the community informed. Since this is a listserv, if you decide you don't want to continue receiving it you can unsubscribe at any time.

Police Related Questions/Comments

- **Criminal activity happening on 10th Street NE between Harvey and Auburn Way -**
Residents reported there have been stolen cars, boat motors and smash and grabs from neighbor's homes. Mayor Lewis said he would be happy to come out with the Police to get a plan up and running to increase safety in the neighborhood.
- **What should residents do about door to door solicitors?**
Door to door sales have proven to be a new tact for criminal activity. Police advised against signing up for anything being sold by this approach; to prevent people from knocking on your door, residents can install a no soliciting sign.

- **9-1-1**

Residents were encouraged to report everything to 9-1-1. The citizens of Auburn own the 9-1-1 system. You should call 9-1-1 whenever you have an emergency, feel something suspicious is going on, need to speak with an officer or file a report (online reporting is also available http://www.auburnwa.gov/Emergency/Police/Citizen_Online_Police_Reporting.asp if you would prefer to file your report that way). **PLEASE NOTE:** If calling from a cell phone you need to ask for an “Auburn Call Receiver.”

Auburn shares ownership of the 9-1-1 system with other South King County cities and the calls go to a dispatch center so residents shouldn't worry about tying up the phone line when making non-emergency calls. When you call 9-1-1 it will be answered by a “Call Receiver.” The Call Receiver will determine whether or not your call is an emergency to be handled right away or to have an officer make contact with you to file a non-emergency report. They will ask questions which are specifically designed to obtain information so that the proper response can be made for your call.

If you want to know what the officer finds out be sure to let the Call Receiver know you DO want to be contacted by the officer when they've completed their investigation.

In addition to emergency issues, residents should also call 9-1-1 for non-emergency issues such as street lights out, stop lights out, missing stop signs, fireworks, loose dogs, sewer backups, water leaks, etc. An alternative is to report them via the City website. The link is under Online Services at the top of the page and is called Online Citizen Report (half way down): http://www.auburnwa.gov/Business/public_works/Online_Citizen_Report.asp.

Streets/Sewer/Traffic Related Questions/Comments

- ***How can residents get potholes fixed?***

The City has an established pothole patrol line that residents are encouraged to report needed repairs (253-931-3048) Ext. 1; after a location has been reported potholes will be repaired in approximately 48 hours.

- ***Will speed bumps be placed along K St NE between Harvey Road and Dick Scobee?***

Mayor Lewis replied this would require a separate meeting to discuss as a neighborhood; neighborhood meetings can be requested through the Community Services Division (see contact information at end of notes for Duanna Richards and/or Kirsten Reynolds).

- ***Are there long range plans for 8th Street NE between Auburn Way and Harvey Road?***

Mayor Lewis explained many years ago the plan was to change the road into four lanes. There has been no funding secured to complete this project; it will remain on a project list as a main concern to get residents off Lea Hill and on to the valley floor.

- ***Can a solid white line be painted on M and Harvey?***

At the M Street and Harvey Road intersection there is currently one lane heading straight and two lanes that turn towards the college, having a solid white line between the straight lane and the turn lanes will help keep traffic separated and safer. Staff is currently looking at changing that entire intersection for safety and improved functionality.

- ***Can sinking curbs on 11th and M Street be refurbished?***

Transportation staff will check into options for this and report back with possible solutions.

Public Works Project Presentation

Project Engineer, Jacob Sweeting, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the road improvement project and facilitated a question and answer session. The project location is from M Street NE through the intersection of 8th and Harvey, south to 4th Street SE.

Several goals the City will be working towards include, but are not limited to: replacement of the roadway surface and foundation, improvement and construction of sidewalks and utilities nearing the end of their service life, ease traffic congestion by providing additional capacity and improve safety by:

- Allowing a center turn lane of traffic to turn safely into driveways and side streets without blocking traffic.
- Adding a northbound lane to accommodate heavy northbound traffic.
- New eastbound lane will allow eastbound and turning traffic to move through intersection in a shorter period of time.
- Signal timing will be optimized and overall delay times reduced.

The project schedule and cost are as follows:

- Design Phase: November 2007 - March 2009
- Construction Phase: June 2009 - September 2009
- Project Completion = September 2009
- Total Project Cost = \$2.25 Million

Potential project impacts include:

- Loss of on-street parking to allow for additional lanes.
- East sidewalk moved to property line to allow for additional lanes. Landscaping and fences in City right-of-way require removal or relocation.
- Power pole relocations will require tree removal or trimming and overhead easements.
- Temporary utility service interruptions.
- Construction noise and traffic delays.

Question and Answer Session

- ***How widespread will power outages be?***

There is no anticipation for the power to be out. If power would need to be shut down owners would be given 48 hours of notice beforehand.

- ***Where is the funding coming from for the project?***

Residents expressed concern that the project being proposed would not actually happen because of budget shortfalls. Mayor Lewis clarified this project has been in process for the last 12 years. Auburn received a Federal grant to do this road improvement project; typically large road improvement project funding is obtained this way in efforts to save taxpayer dollars. As the money comes in from the grants the City will complete the work.

- ***Will the entire street be taken out and rebuilt?***

One portion of M Street will be completely rebuilt to ensure a stronger, longer lasting surface; street sweepers will be scheduled to maintain the road every couple of hours to prevent loose rock and dust.

- ***Will the M Street man hole covers be moved?***

There are several man hole covers located on M Street that are directly in the driving path, will they be moved? Staff explained there are two main sewer lines located on M Street and workers need to have access; however, the number of man holes will be reduced.

- ***Will lanes be shut down during rush hour traffic?***

Yes, the southbound lanes will be completely closed down during the morning commute and the northbound lanes will be completely closed down during the evening commute throughout the construction.

Police/Block Watch/Emergency Preparedness Presentations

- Auburn has 102 commissioned Police officers that patrol six Police sectors; there are twelve officers on patrol at any given time covering 212 miles of roads, serving 67,000 people in two counties that are divided by two rivers. All Police calls are prioritized with threat to life or property first. Officers won't be found in the Police Station; they are always out in the community in their patrol cars that have been equipped as mobile offices with several computers that give access to information they need right then and there.
- ***What is Block Watch?***
Block Watch is built on the concept of neighbors watching out for each other because you know better than anyone else who belongs in your neighborhood and who doesn't. If you think "maybe I should call 9-1-1 about this," you should. Residents were encouraged to set up a Block Watch, once the group is formed Community Programs Officer, Andy Gould, will come out to do the formal training on what to watch for, how to react and how to get neighborhood participation. Groups are encouraged to get together several times a year.
- ***How can I be prepared for emergencies?***
Emergency Preparedness Manager Sarah Miller gave a brief presentation regarding programs citizens can participate in to prepare their homes, families and neighborhoods in case of disaster. Ms. Miller talked about Community Emergency Response Team (CERT); this training is comprised of 24+ hours of classroom education over an eight week period where hands-on practice in topics including first aid, triage and survival skills is taught. Classes are free and basic safety equipment is provided.

Another program discussed was Map Your Neighborhood (MYN). The MYN program helps get neighbors together and meet with purpose; neighbors are taught how to get organized before a disaster happens. Neighborhoods need to be self-organized and willing to meet and share information together as a group.

Generalized disaster preparedness training is also available to interested community groups and organizations. This is a 90 minute presentation that covers general disaster preparedness information, community resources and local hazards information. To schedule any of these classes for your neighborhood, contact the Emergency Preparedness Office at 253-876-1925 or e-mail emergencyprep@auburnwa.gov; you can also visit their website to see a schedule: <http://www.auburnwa.gov/disaster>.

Summary of Solutions Discussed/Action Items

1. An additional eastbound lane will be added this year on 8th Street NE.
2. A solid white line will be painted between the straight lane and the turn lanes on M and Harvey as part of the finishing touches of the M Street widening project.
3. Public Works reviewed sinking sidewalks and curbs on 11th and M Street; they have been added to sidewalk inventory list to be programmed for improvement.
4. Police got residents/businesses involved to form a Block Watch group, official training was done.

Project Update as of June 11, 2009

Puget Sound Energy will be relocating utility poles in June and July. The City's Contractor is expected to start construction in late July or early August and continue through November.

The first phase of work will be to replace damaged sewer main and other utilities.

The City anticipates that M St. NE from 4th St. NE to 6th St. NE will be closed to through traffic from Monday, Aug.3 – Friday, Sept.4, while the sewer main and other utilities are constructed.

While we had attempted to keep the road open during construction, a closure is required due to previously unforeseen complications and safety concerns related to soil conditions and the required digging of 10 foot deep trenches to replace damaged sewer lines.

Local and emergency access will be maintained at all times.

Community Contact Information:

- Jacob Sweeting, Public Works Project Engineer, 253-804-5059, or jsweeting@auburnwa.gov
- Duanna Richards, Community Services Manager, 253-931-3099 or drichards@auburnwa.gov
- Kirsten Reynolds, Community Services Project Assistant, 253-876-1964, or kreynolds@auburnwa.gov